DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 373 081 TM 021 970

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE | High Standards for All Students. |
| INSTITUTION | Fund for the Improvement and Reform of Schools and Teaching (ED/OERI), Washington, DC. |
| REPORT NO | ED/OERI-94-5; FIRST-94-7012 |
| PUB DATE | Jun 94 |
| NOTE | 9p. |
| PUB TYPE | Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC01 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Academic Achievement; Certification; *Educational Change; Educational Finance; Elementary Secondary Education; Government Role; Knowledge Level; *Standards; *State Programs |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Goals 2000; *National Education Goals 1990; National Standards; Standard Setting |

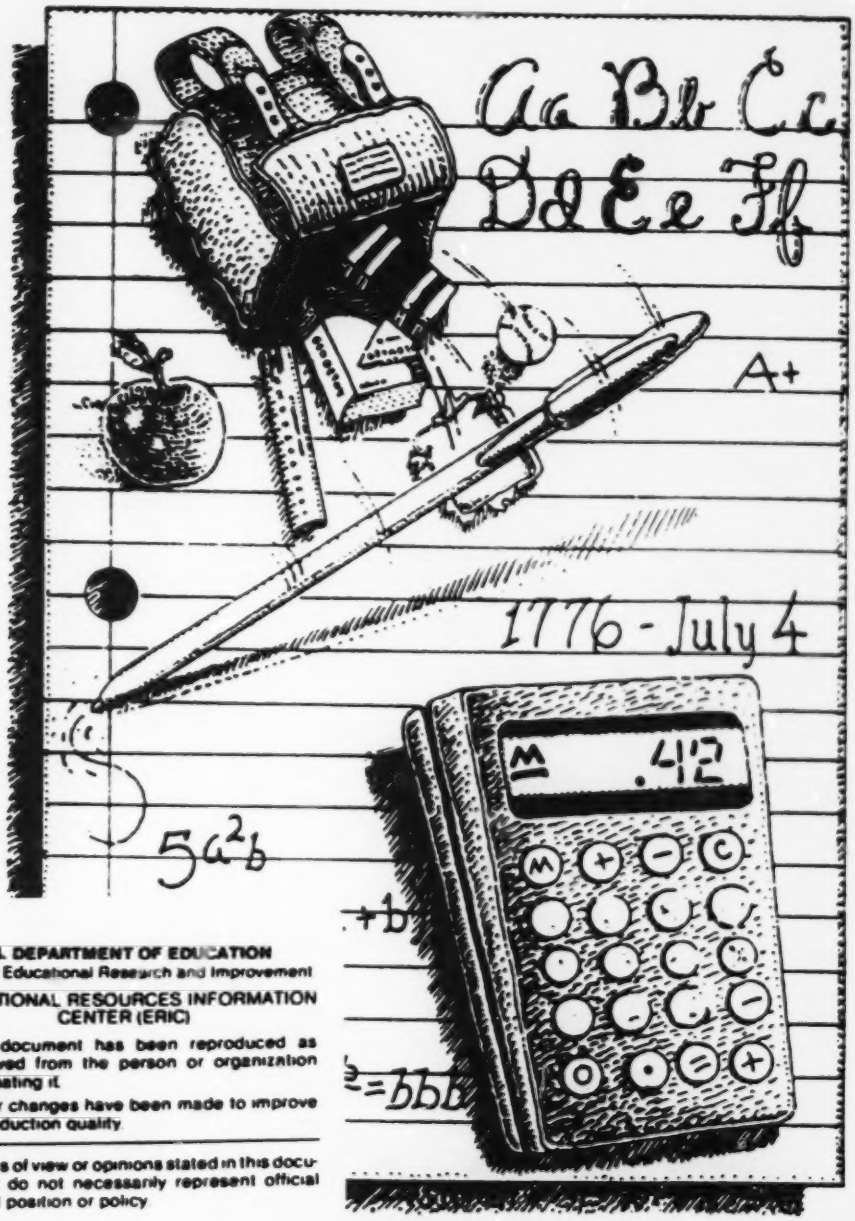
ABSTRACT

A historic change is taking place in American education with the development of voluntary national standards that will identify what all students should know and be able to do in order to live and work in the twenty-first century. Content standards will define what students should know and be able to do, and performance standards will identify the levels of achievement desired for the subject matter defined in the content standards. Establishing high standards gives everyone a goal for which to aim. The voluntary national standards are being developed by major professional and scholarly organizations with support from Federal agencies and foundations. Thousands of teachers, scholars, administrators, parents, and other members of the public are participating in shaping these national standards. These standards will undergo extensive review to affirm their national status, with possible certification by the National Education Standards and Improvement Council which was established by the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Standards currently being developed by the states to meet their own needs will be blueprints for local standards. The Goals 2000: Educate America Act will also provide funds to the states to develop their own improvements and to implement their plans for standards. Resources are listed for work done to date on standards in specific curriculum areas. (SLD)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED 373 081

# High Standards for All Students




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

**U.S. Department of Education**

**June 1994**

TM021970

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

## Why do our children need high standards?

When you get on an airplane, you want a pilot who has been held to the highest standards of flight training. When you need an operation, you want a surgeon who has been held to the highest standards of medical education. And when you root for American athletes in the Olympics, you know they won't win the gold unless they have trained to meet the highest standards of international competition.

In many areas of our life, we expect—and demand—high standards. We know their great value. They help bring out the best in us.

When we do not hold all students to high academic standards, the result can be low achievement and the tragedy of children leaving school without ever having been challenged to fulfill their potential.

But a historic change is now taking place in American education: the development of voluntary national standards that will clearly identify what all students should know and be able to do to live and work in the 21st century. These standards will be designed to be internationally competitive.

The movement to develop voluntary national standards has already begun. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics has prepared *mathematics* standards, and the U.S. Department of Education is funding the creation of voluntary national standards in the *arts, civics and government, economics, English, foreign languages, geography, history,* and *science.*

## What are these standards?

Content standards define what all students should know and be able to do. They describe the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students should have in order to attain high levels of competency in challenging subject matter.

Performance standards identify the levels of achievement in the subject matter set out in the content standards. They state how well students demonstrate their competency in a subject.

The standards will be voluntary, not mandatory. They will stand or fall depending on whether they are accepted by teachers, administrators, parents, and the public. No federal mandate will impose the new standards. States may use these standards as models in developing their own content and performance standards.

## How will high standards make education better?

Establishing high standards lets everyone in the education system know what to aim for. They allow every student, every parent, and every teacher to share in common expectations of what students should know and be able to accomplish. Students will learn more when more is expected of them, in school and at home. And standards will help create coherence in educational practices by aligning teacher education, instructional materials, and assessment practices.

## Why does American education need voluntary national standards?

American education has never had national standards. When no one agrees on what students should learn, each part of the education system pursues different, and sometimes contradictory, aims.

The new improvement of American education begins with an agreement about ***what students should learn***—a set of voluntary national benchmarks that states may use as guidance in developing their own content and performance standards. But this will NOT be a national curriculum.

Meaningful voluntary national standards will help state officials, local educators, teachers, parents, and others to establish challenging standards for students to ensure that the education system will focus on providing the opportunity for all students to learn to high levels. This can lead to:

- Textbooks that will emphasize student understanding;
- Student assessments that will test whether students understand and can use at high levels the knowledge and skills in the content standards;
- Instructional programs and methods that will emphasize not only the basics but reasoning and problem solving;
- Teacher education and professional development that will prepare educators to teach to challenging standards; and
- New technologies that will increase learning to meet high standards geared to internationally competitive levels of performance.

## How did the movement for national standards begin?

In 1989, President Bush and the nation's governors, with leadership from then-Governor Bill Clinton, met in Charlottesville, Virginia. They agreed that the nation must set ambitious education goals. These bipartisan National Education Goals are the basis of the recently passed Goals 2000: Educate America Act, President Clinton's landmark education initiative.

The Goals included a pledge that by the year 2000, all American students would demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter. To provide direction, the Congressionally established, bipartisan National Council on Education Standards and Testing recommended the development of voluntary education standards that would provide the needed focus for state and local efforts.

## How are voluntary national standards being developed?

The U.S. Department of Education, other federal agencies, and foundations have made grants to major professional and scholarly organizations to develop voluntary national standards in different subjects. Each standards-setting project includes a broad range of

people in the process. Thousands of teachers, scholars, administrators, parents, and other members of the public are participating in shaping the national standards. These standards will undergo extensive review to affirm their national status, including possible certification by the National Education Standards and Improvement Council established in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Certification will indicate that the standards are challenging, consistent with the best knowledge about teaching and learning, and have been developed with broad input from educators and others.

## What is the role of the states?

A number of states have begun to develop or are revising their own state content standards (sometimes known as state curriculum frameworks). Using the expertise of classroom teachers, parents, scholars, public and private school administrators, elected officials, businesses, and the community at large in advisory groups, the states are defining content standards to meet their own needs. These state standards will act as blueprints for local schools, districts, and others to develop the classroom materials and lessons for a single subject or combination of subjects. They will also establish guidelines for effective teacher preparation, professional development, and certification.

In addition, the new Goals 2000: Educate America Act will provide funds to the states to develop their own state improvement and implementation plans that will include content and performance standards and valid assessments aligned with the standards. The setting of state standards can be informed by the voluntary national standards. The state plans will also include voluntary standards or strategies to ensure that all students have a fair opportunity to achieve the knowledge and skills described in the state content and performance standards.

### An Example of a Draft U.S. History Standard

By high school graduation, students should be able to demonstrate understanding of how the roots of representative government and political rights were defined during the colonization period by:

- comparing how early colonies were established and governed;
- analyzing fundamental principles of representative government in the colonies;
- explaining the development of representative institutions in the newly established colonies;
- analyzing how political rights were affected by gender, property ownership, religion, and legal status.

## How can you learn more about the national standards projects?

You can order a copy of the math standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the arts standards developed by a U.S. Department of Education-funded consortium of arts organizations. Write the Department-funded groups working on standards in other subjects if you would like to participate as a reviewer of drafts or review those that are complete. You can contact them at the following locations:

***Mathematics***

To order Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics (Item number: 398E1, ISBN 0–87353–273–2, $25 each—discounts for bulk orders), write:

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
Order Processing
1906 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

***Arts***

Released: March 1994. To order *National Standards for Arts Education: What Every Young American Should Know and Be Able to Do in the Arts* (Item number: 1605, cost: $15), write:

Music Educators National Conference Publications Sales
1806 Robert Fulton Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Developed in coordination with the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the National Art Education Association, and the National Dance Association

Contact: Peggy Senko
*Development also supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities*

***Civics and Government***

Center for Civic Education
5146 Douglas Fir Road
Calabasas, CA 91302–1467

Contact: Charles Quigley
Completion: Fall 1994
*Also supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts*

***Geography***

National Council for Geographic Education
Geography Standards Project
1600 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

In coordination with the Association of American Geographers, the National Geographic Society, and the American Geographical Society

Contact: Anthony DeSouza
Completion: Fall 1994
*Also supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities*

*History*

National Center for History in the Schools at UCLA
231 Moore Hall, 405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Contact: Charlotte Crabtree
Completion: Winter 1994
*Also supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities*

*Science*

National Academy of Sciences
National Research Council
2101 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20418

Contact: Angelo Collins
Completion: Winter 1994
*Also supported by the National Science Foundation*

*Foreign Languages*

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Inc.
6 Executive Plaza
Yonkers, NY 10701–6801

In collaboration with the American Association of Teachers of French, American Association of Teachers of German, and American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese

Contact: Jamie Draper
Completion: Winter 1995
*Also supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities*

*U.S. Department of Education*

For general information about content standards development, contact:

Office of Educational Research and Improvement/FIRST Office
U.S. Department of Education
555 New Jersey Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20208–5524

GOALS 2000

*A World-Class Education for Every Child*

## The National Education Goals

In stressing quality education from early childhood through lifelong learning, the President and the governors adopted the National Education Goals, which were put into law by the Congress in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. The voluntary national standards will help define what it means to reach the third and fourth of the goals below.

The Goals state that by the year 2000:

- All children in America will start school ready to learn.
- The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
- All students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy.
- United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.
- Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.
- The nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.
- Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.



7 *U.S. Government Printing Office: 1994 — 377-187/10488

United States
Department of Education
Washington, DC 20208–5570

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use, $300

Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. Department of
Education
Permit No. G–17

FIRST CLASS

**For more information about Goals 2000, standards, or for other questions about education, call:**

**1–800–USA–LEARN**

FIRST 94–7012

ED/OERI 94–5